

W. L. Lovejoy

AN
ADDRESS,
DELIVERED DECEMBER 22, 1837,
IN
THE VILLAGE OF LOCKPORT, N. Y.
COMMEMORATIVE
OF THE
MARTYRDOM
OF
REV. E. P. LOVEJOY,
WHO WAS KILLED BY
THE MOB,

In the City of Alton, Ill., on the night of November 7, 1837.

By JOHN KEEP,
Pastor of the Pres. Church,

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PRINTED BY GEORGE REESE.
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A D D R E S S .

JUDGEMENT is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for *truth* is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that *departeth* from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgement. Isaiah 59. 14, 15.

This is Isaiah's graphic description of the times in which he lived. Judgement is turned away backward—i. e., *The voice of the Laws is silent*: justice standeth afar off—*crimes go unrebuked*: truth is fallen in the streets—*its advocates are frowned down by the popular cry*: equity cannot enter—*witnesses dare not testify to the truth in our Courts of Justice*: yea truth faileth—*her advocates quail before the power of the oppressor*: he that departeth from evil—*defendeth the truth and follows it*: maketh himself a prey—is deemed imprudent, a fanatic, an incendiary, a mad-man, and falls a victim to the revenge of the multitude, dies a martyr. And the Lord saw it and it displeased him that there was no judgement. *Infringments upon Law—the disregard of human rights, all come under the distinct cognizance of Jehovah.*

God has placed every intelligent being under Law. He has given to the human family a wise and benignant government; and he holds, *responsible*, the men who are appointed to administer this government. It is his declared will that *law shall speak*, a terror to evil doers—to them who do well, peace: and when she thus speaks, that the majesty of her voice be regarded, and the whole import of her testimony be respected.

All this was felt deeply by the Son of Imlah:—his grief was strong, in view of the gross invasion of human rights by the frenzied cry and onset of the populace: but in a deeper current flowed the tide of his sorrow when he saw, in this prostration of *Law*, the rights of GOD invaded.

The superior is always reached by the blow which falls upon the dependant. Touch a child, and you reach his parent.—Bind a *citizen*, and you speak into the ear of the government

under which he lives. Take from a single being, whom God has made in his own image, any right which God has given him, and you make a direct encroachment upon the *prerogative* of God, and, by his own direction you are recorded in *his* book as a ROBBER.

The state of society, here described by the Prophet, did not long precede the period of the entire destruction of the government—the utter loss of their Civil, Political, and Religious liberties, and their absolute enslavement, for seventy years, in Babylon. A public sentiment, so depraved, was indeed a dire omen—a portent of any thing but good to the people. The scales of *justice* knocked from her hands; Judges conniving at deeds of wrong; the *aggressor* cleared, and the injured sent away without redress; the *vile* triumphing over the virtuous; the weak trampled under foot by the strong; the poor robbed of his wages; and though crying, in his distress, there is no helper; the oppressor, so cruel in his exactions, as to hide himself from his own flesh, so rapacious in his avarice as to make merchandise of his own offspring. In such a state of public morals, the vengeance of God slumbereth not—destruction hasteneth. The issue stands prominent. You read it, in the seventy year's captivity of the Nation; in the destruction of Jerusalem which soon followed the crucifixion of Christ; and in the permanent subjugation of that people, scattered and peeled, through every generation, to the present period. This depravity of public sentiment was marked with far *deeper* guilt, by the fact that it existed among a *Christian* people;—and for this reason its *results* pour upon our ear, as a Nation, the heavier admonition. “That which has been is now; and that which is to be hath already been;” in respect to the principles upon which God governs the world, “there is no new thing under the sun.”

This description of the Prophet may, with few exceptions, be justly considered as the standing chronicle of the world.—The unskilful or oppressive administration of wicked rulers;—the failure of the Laws to protect the innocent, to shield individual rights, and to secure the public welfare, have been the painful events of every age, and have swollen the list of judgments, by which a righteous God has punished the people for their disobedience. Hitherto they have enjoyed, but to a limi-

ted extent, the blessings of civil, political and religious liberty. Personal rights have been assailed, political rights have been sacrificed or curtailed, and religious rights denied, in the incessant struggle of the rich, to entrench themselves within an unrighteous ascendancy; and of Rulers, to sustain their interests as distinct and above the ruled. Efforts to break the yoke have but partially succeeded; and oppression, in various aspects and attitudes, has maintained its operations, even among those Nations in which the blessings of freedom have been the most richly enjoyed. Every age has furnished its champions in defence of the liberties of mankind; and to their efforts, under God, is the world indebted for its civilization, and for what it enjoys of a deliverance from an iron despotism.— Among them we reckon Alfred the Great in England; Gustavus Vasa in Sweden; Luther in Germany; Wm. Tell in Switzerland, and Washington in our own country.

Love of Liberty, and the generous purpose to extend and to perpetuate its blessings, excited our Pilgrim Fathers to conceive, and to execute the sublime design, to people the Continent of North America. History records no enterprise, so signally marked for purity of principle, for wisdom in its arrangements, and for magnitude and grandeur in its objects. The result is seen by a world in wonder, in most that is good, and noble, and lovely, in our highly favored country, in the giving up, in a period of two hundred years, of a deep wilderness, to a Nation, refined and elevated in character, rich in her schools, her religious institutions, her moral influence, and her internal resources; mighty in power, a sister, and compeer among the renowned of the old world, and if not destroyed by her infatuation, enchantingly glorious in the prospect of her destinies.

In Dec. 1620: 217 years since, the May Flower, fraught with the precious cargo, entered the Plymouth Bay. She cast anchor and moored. The whole ship's company observed, on board, a season of religious worship, mingling the entreaties of hope with their devout thanksgiving. They prayerfully settled the principles, and adopted the form, of both a civil and ecclesiastical government. And on the 22d day, the vigorous pioneer, JOHN ALDEN, leaped upon the Plymouth Rock, the germ of a mighty Kingdom. The whole company landed: in their souls the spirit of freedom; in their midst, by a

solemn espousal, the principles of civil, political and religious liberty ; embodying a sound well digested government, they encamped upon the snow of Dec., a church, a commonwealth, a republic. Now, with the Virginia Colony at Jamestown, the settlement of the Dutch upon the Hudson, and the followers of Penn upon the Schuylkill, they stand up before the world an Empire of nearly fifteen millions—would that I might add, of freemen, with all the rights of freemen in possession, and guarantied.

Would that, on such a review. our deep emotions were none but those of delight. Yes we may be glad, and we will rejoice. But let our rejoicing be in God, where alone can rest our confidence. "Rejoice with trembling."

Need I tell you, fellow-citizens, and Christian friends, that our liberties are assailed ; that the death knell of bondage does not yet fall upon our ear ; that nearly one sixth of our fellow-citizens are bought and sold as cattle ; that the right of free discussion is questioned—that the liberty of the press is denied—that the Post Office is rifled of its contents, and the deed of robbery passes unrebuked ; that a high reward is unblushingly offered for the ears and the heads of our peaceable and virtuous citizens ; that a slave state calls upon a free state, to enact and to enforce laws, which would deprive her own inhabitants of their inalienable rights ; that the laws of our land do not secure the quiet enjoyment of personal rights ; nor guard property from the depredations of marauders, nor life from the assassin. Tell you of these things ? all, and more than this, are a matter of record. Ere this they are chronicled throughout Christendom. Our liberties *are* assailed. We have again to contest the ground with Tyrants. At this late day, after we have boasted of our Independence for more than half a century, the question is again brought before the people, are we a Nation of freemen, or in fact, a Nation of bondmen ? Shall the principles of liberty embraced, warmly and nobly sustained by the choicest spirits of antiquity, and the wisest heads and the best hearts of modern days ; the pure principles of a righteous freedom, so eloquently and impressively presented in our bill of rights, and so skilfully interwoven in our constitution, now be abandoned ? the principles of our Pilgrim Fathers, for which they endured incredible toils, privations and hardships be ab-

jured by ~~the~~ ^{these} children, and this too, amidst the best facilities for a glorious triumph, a triumph which shall pour its benig-
 nity upon a world, and assuredly lead on to the establishment
 of universal liberty on the earth? Shall we now prove recre-
 ant to *their* vows and our own, and "attempt to roll back the
 wheels of that reformation, on whose banners are inscribed the
 liberty and equality of the human race," securing to each in-
 dividual alike, whether he be rich or poor, personal protection,
 "the blessings of peace, and the unmolested rights of consci-
 ence?" The spirit was caught from Heaven; and its gifted
 promulgators, amidst all their imperfection, showed that they
 held communion with an influence superior to earth, while
 they seized upon principles established by God himself, as eter-
 nal, sanctioned by the death of his Son, and announced by the
 Angels who heralded his advent, "on earth peace, *good will*
 towards men."

This momentous question *now* comes before the people of this
 country, in circumstances of vastly accumulated interest, since
 it was so correctly and nobly answered in the convention of '76.
 The light which glimmered then, has now broken into the
 effulgence of the morning. Shall we, *thus enlightened*, open
 the grave,—throw into it our bill of rights, and our Federal
 Constitution, and our free institutions, stamp upon the sods
 which cover them, strike the rogue's march and retire, declar-
 ing to tyrants, that liberty is but a song, that we will now, as
 the result of our long experiment; kiss the chains which bind
 us, smile at our degradation, and with the crouching mein of a
 spaniel pocket the scorn and derision of a laughing world.

I mean what I say. These interrogatories are not thrown
 in as a mere "rhetorical flourish." I put them to you in sober
 earnest:—to you, Fellow-Citizens, and with emotions I have
 never before experienced touching our common country. At
 no previous period, in my judgement, has the call been more
 solemn and imperious than *now*, upon every citizen, to take his
 soundings, to wipe his compass glass, to re-examine the hull,
 and to renew his caulking. I do not, here, refer at all to any
 merely political measures. If the hull of the ship be sound,
 the keel firm, the helm strong, and the rigging good, I am qui-
 et to leave it with the people to select the Commodore: Nor
 is it my duty or my privilege, as a Minister of Christ, to contend

in the choice. But it is my province, as an individual Christian, as a private citizen, and in my sacred official character, to manifest a deep concern respecting fundamental principles.—Here I must act efficiently; do what I can to caulk the ship, to copper well her keel and bottom, to strengthen the helm, to splice the ropes, to renew the canvass, and to PROP the MAST. The whole range, minute and aggregate, of a healthful moral influence in the community, does this.

What shall be done in the PRESENT CRISIS? is the momentous and thrilling question now before the people. Upon the answer they shall now give depend the destinies of this Nation; on the question of Liberty or oppression—I will not say, although in human view it verily seems like the fact, that upon this answer are suspended the liberties of mankind: for God *can* find other channels for the fulfilment of his holy pledge should this exalted, but ungrateful nation, become annihilated.

An astounding interest has been given to this inquiry, by the recent tragical death of the Rev. Elijah Parish Lovejoy, at the city of Alton, Illinois. I am grateful, Christian Friends, Brethren, and Fellow Citizens, that *you* have felt the impulse of this tragedy. It is felt in every portion of this country, with various emotions, I am aware, but with a power which will tell in the annals of this great Republic; which will form a distinct epoch in the history of human rights, and speak loudly in the destinies of the world. Should the INVADER triumph, the Genius of Liberty, as he flaps his wings for a flight from our land, will point to LOVEJOY's grave as the commencement of this triumph. But should the invader be *vanquished*, as we trust will be the fact, then, the Genius of Liberty, in her onward march of benignity and glory, will hold up before the Nation the mantle of this *murdered citizen* and exclaim, by this you conquered;—because, by the sacrifice of this man, the PEOPLE WERE AROUSED TO THE DEFENCE OF THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

Lovejoy was a native of the state of Maine. He early removed to Missouri, and prosecuted his studies with a view to a professional life, associated with the young men, and was respected by the people of St. Louis, imbibing the sentiments, and assimilating to the manners and habits of the place—proclaiming in opinion, and a ready coadjutor in sustaining,

the peculiar views of the Slave States. He was thus matriculated as a Son of Missouri, acknowledged in the city as prominent among the core of their talented young men. In no sense, therefore, can he be justly reproached, by pro-slavery men as an intruder from the north, interfering with the peculiar institutions of the south.

He commenced his *public* life as the Editor of a political paper in St. Louis. In this station he was prominent. In 1832, during a revival of religion in St. Louis, he became a Christian. He studied Theology in Princeton Seminary. In Nov. 1833 he took the Editorship of a *religious* paper in St. Louis, at the same time preaching to an infant church about 15 miles distant. He soon was engaged in a controversy with the Roman Catholics, who are numerous and powerful in that city, and who, not long since, employed military power to *compel* free citizens to take off their hats, in the street, in reverence to the "host" in a popish procession. In this controversy, in which he brought to bear upon Romanists, the caustic power of *Bible Truth*, his peculiar troubles commenced. It soon became a *disputed* question, whether he *might publish* what he believed to be the truth, touching the Roman Catholic doctrines and practices. At this moment, the native energies of his mind, and the fixed principles of his heart bathed in Heaven, sustained him, and with a cool deliberation he took his stand, in defence of the liberty of the press.

When Lovejoy cordially embraced christianity, as a convert to Christ, he proved that his conversion was genuine. It was a conversion to the *truth* to the gospel, in the purity and extent of its principles—and to his *whole duty*, under the guidance of these principles. In following these principles, he came in contact with the errors and abominations of Romanism—and he soon saw that *Slavery* was rotten at its foundation—a system of foul hypocrisy, and horrid in all its details. His convictions, on these exciting subjects, did not sleep in his bosom, nor was his conscience lulled in the cradle of expediency.—He laid these convictions before the mind of the same public which had hitherto caressed him. A storm immediately gathered over his head.

In the night of the 21st July, 1836, a MOB, in St. Louis, stopped the Religious paper he published by upsetting the

Press, and throwing the types into the street. During this trial he became a confirmed abolitionist. He removed his press to Alton, Illinois, about 22 miles above St. Louis. Here, as soon as his press was removed from the boat it was destroyed, and "the type scattered upon the wharf."

In this process, Lovejoy saw and *felt* the fanaticism of ignorance and religious intolerance ; the virulence of superstition, and the malignant spirit of American Slavery ; and he justly concluded, that to cower before such a spirit, was to become a slave himself, and at the same time, to abandon his country to the reign of despotism. His noble soul seized upon the only righteous alternative, and by this decision, he has inscribed his own humble name on the imperishable record of the disinterested Patriot, the Hero and the Martyr.

He rebuilt his press and commenced his paper in Alton, the warm and efficient advocate of human rights. On the 21st Aug. '37 his press was again destroyed. Another press was procured, and this also was destroyed by the MOB. He obtained another, and in this third attempt to establish a free press in the city of Alton, in a *free state*, this estimable citizen, this Lion-hearted man, this undaunted Christian, *lost his own LIFE*.

The press had been deposited in a store, for safekeeping, in which the owners, with Lovejoy and others, armed, remained for its defence. They had previously applied to the Mayor of the city for protection, and in their measures acted by his direction. The MOB came, demanded the press, and violently assaulted and set fire to the building. One of their number was killed by a shot from the assailed—and soon after, Lovejoy fell in death ; the press was thrown into the river, and the infuriated assailants retired, with the shouts of triumph.

This tragical event occurred, in a *nominally* free city, in a free state—under a republican form of government, on the night of Nov. 7, 1837 ! The perpetrators, it is said, openly name their deed of horror and boast of it ; and that in the city of Alton, civil law is so entirely prostrate, that no measures have yet been taken to arraign them at the bar of their injured country, and the tribunal of insulted Justice. "Truth is fallen in the streets ; equity cannot enter."

These facts speak for themselves, and they speak to all.—

No man needs to misunderstand them. No intelligent, reflecting person does misunderstand them. A large portion of the periodicals of the day, speak of them in unmeasured terms of reprobation. This general expression of horror, this burst of honest indignation, proceeds from men of all political parties, irrespective of religious sect and opinions, from men who have hitherto stood aloof from Abolition, from men entirely above all suspicion in respect to any sinister design ; from papers in the slave states, from intelligence and patriotism, and virtue universally:—in truth, the embodied sentiment, which this malignant, ominous tragedy at Alton, has brought forth from the American Press, is the trumpet tongue of LIBERTY proclaiming, in the sharp shrill notes of alarm and agony, to the slumbering Yeomenry of '37, the heaven-born principles which the wakeful and Lion-hearted Yeomenry of '76, so successfully defended at Bunker Hill, Saratoga, and Yorktown. The great question now pending is : will the Yeomenry of '37, prove recreant to the vows of the Yeomanry of '76.

We are not indeed unanimous in this expression. THE MOB has its apologists. The *Attorney General* in three of the free states, Massachusetts, New-York and Illinois, has volunteered in efforts which excuse them!! "Men of respectability and standing" have cheered them on. Measures, which *such men* in Alton adopted previous to the outrage there, paved the way for the onset. Personal rights gravely assailed and *denied* by "respectable" citizens, either singly or associated, cannot fail to give the watchword to the populace, and "to let slip the dogs of war." But while, from the men who honestly raise an opposing voice to our course, we withhold reproach and anathema, we cannot withhold our rebuke. The course *they* pursue admonishes us that the destroyer is on his way, and that we should seize upon the present period as a momentous crisis : & pour from the press, while *yet it can speak*, such a flood of light ; and send out from our Pulpits, from our public seminaries, from other schools, and from every source of healthful influence which we can control, such an amount of testimony, as shall sweetly and effectually gain the community to the cause of "free discussion and human rights." This accomplished, they can, with far greater ease, be brought fully over to the cause of God, as the humble and faithful followers of

Christ, when we shall witness the great mass arrayed, with the holy attributes of Jehovah, on the side of the oppressed, and against the oppressor.

Is it asked why make so much of the death of Lovejoy?—Not *merely* because he was an ABOLITIONIST, nor because he was a Christian, and a talented and patriotic Citizen; nor indeed wholly because he fell a victim to the pro-slavery spirit. Other considerations conspire in this matter. Lovejoy was sacrificed while advocating the principles of that righteous liberty, which has been purchased by the best blood of our Fathers; and which we, in common with our fellow-citizen, have sacredly pledged ourselves to sustain. I do not consider Lovejoy as a martyr to abolition only, but also, a martyr to Law and Order. His inalienable rights, as a man, as a Christian, as an *American Citizen*, have been cloven down, by a ruthless banditti. The fatal blow *he* received is a *deadly thrust* at the rights of every American Citizen, and of every human being. The assailants justified, tolerated, or even winked at, will go far towards rendering the epithet American Citizen, which has been our pride, a reproach among all civilized Nations.

Do you deny that Lovejoy was a martyr, and aver, as some have done, that he needlessly threw away his life? The associations which cluster around me are too portentous and thrilling, to allow me here, to debate with you this point. He was but a man. Some of his friends regret that he took the sword, even in self-defence. Suppose even that he did misjudge in this one thing. Will you overlook the moral courage, the magnanimity, the love of Country, the love of TRUTH, and the holy fear of God, which constitute the marked features of his whole conduct, in this protracted and appalling struggle? He knew that he was hunted like a beast of prey. He acted deliberately, and from a deep and solemn conviction of duty, in the discharge of a high trust, as a defender of the oppressed, and the advocate of the rights of God and man. With fasting and much prayer he sought wisdom from above; and the best decisions of his best judgement, sanctified by the chastened devotions of a pious heart, deeply imbued with the spirit of Heaven, bade him *stand*, and having done all, to *STAND*—for himself—for his family—especially, for his country, and for the Truth. In law, he was justified in his attitude of defence.

Had he killed every assailant, it would have been justifiable homicide. But he neither killed or wounded any one. His own language is, "That I am enabled to continue firm in the midst of my trials, is all of God. I am perfectly calm—perfectly resigned. Though in the midst of danger I have a constant sense of security that keeps me, alike, from fear and anxiety."

But how stand his ruffian assailants? Lovejoy had violated no law of his country. At St. Louis, at St. Charles, and at Alton, his conduct had been that of a discreet, quiet, faithful, peaceable, loyal citizen. A few days previous to the murder, a committee of citizens of Alton, seven in number, testify that Lovejoy's private character was unimpeachable—that there was neither charge nor insinuation that he had ever been guilty of any infraction of law. Yet this same committee, in their report to the meeting, "require him to abandon his constitutional rights, his principles, his occupation, his all." In his address to the meeting, he repelled, with meekness, the charges and insinuations which had been so lavishly hurled against him;—stated that he respected and appreciated the opinions and the feelings of his fellow citizens, but that he was governed by higher considerations than the fear, or the favor of man. He kindly inquired, "What has been my offence? Put your finger upon it;—define it, and I am ready to answer for it. Where can I go? I have been made to feel that if I am not safe in Alton, I am not safe any where. If the civil authorities refuse to protect me, I must look to God to protect me; and if I find a grave in Alton, I am sure I shall die in the discharge of my duty. All I ask is, the protection of law, and the liberty of pursuing a lawful calling in a lawful way." For this claim, and for persisting in this inalienable personal right, Lovejoy was *murdered*.

The only method by which I propose to *avenge the death of this MARTYR*, is, to bring fairly before the people the question, shall a citizen of the U. S. A. be protected in the enjoyment of his personal rights, in the free exercise of private judgement, and of liberty of speech, and in the pursuit of the lawful calling of his choice? It is our duty to *press* this question, at the present eventful crisis, upon the public mind. We are solemnly bound to bring all the influence which can be

gathered from Lovejoy's grave, to bear upon this question. It is a question which the **PEOPLE** must decide. The Revolutionary Patriot is now called upon to fight his battle over again. Rely upon it, the decision of this question, either way, at the present crisis, will impart an impulse, of fearful and momentous aspect, to the onward fulfilment of the destinies of this Nation: on the one hand a wreck, to bleach upon the shores of despotism, or, upon the other, to cheer on the civilized world to the conquests of Christian philanthropy,—leaving in their wake the oppressed relieved, and the community enlightened, refined, virtuous, and blessed. While we hope for the latter, the signs of the times justly awaken our fears. Shall order be sustained, and the laws rule? or shall the precedent become a statute, that certain things must be put down, over and above the laws, and men punished and murdered for peaceably doing what the law authorizes. The latter is the ground recently taken, in many portions of this Republic, and sustained, either directly or indirectly, from sources, to which a bleeding community have the right to look for none but a healthful influence. The most reckless violence has been practised upon innocent citizens. Civil officers, and officers in the church, Christian Brethren, have both countenanced the aggressors, and taken an active part in the outrage, till the Mobocracy have, in fact, become systematized, and approach to the attack in the form of a regular siege:—and, under the ban of its fiendish proscription, the citizen who, from any cause, becomes unpopular, be his claims to respect and confidence ever so prominent, must be disgraced, crushed, or murdered; the press muzzled or silenced; the spirit of free enquiry quenched; and the very **SOUL** of a righteous freedom stricken through with a dart, must lie quivering at the feet of the most odious and revolting despotism, the despotism of a **MOB**. **FREE-MEN** cannot brook an insult like this. And the people, who do not see, in this movement, the footsteps of a rapidly approaching **TYRANNY**, are already stupified by the fangs of the monster. This violence against law must, *in season*, receive its merited rebuke. This whole people must *now* be aroused from their lethargy, “to vindicate the insulted majesty of the laws, and pronounce a sentence upon” mobs, “which the reckless and turbulent will be unable to withstand.”

Mobs cannot *prevail*, unless the public sentiment *sleep*. It has slept. But I am cheered, that the Alton assassination, like the rumbling which precedes the earthquake, will arouse the giant mind of this Nation, to the proper sense of her long neglected duty, and draw out her gushing sympathies for the millions who have no helper.

The stake, in this contest, is more than property or life. Lovejoy died in defence of the right of *thought* and of *speech*—and it is *this* which, above all else, imparts to this whole scene of blood its intense interest and sublimity. Had the English Parliament presumed to stifle free inquiry in her colonies, the eloquence of Hancock, Otis, and Henry, would have thundered amidst the lightnings of a holier indignation. In fact, after the "Boston Massacre," the British officers did declare, that the man who should deliver an address, to commemorate the death of the murdered citizens, should lose his life. WARREN immediately announced himself as the "Orator of the day." His moral courage, the ardor and firmness of his patriotism, and the torrents of his eloquence, struck with astonishment and horror, these dastardly minions of the British Ministry, and hung out before the colonies the signal of a successful campaign and a glorious triumph. Such is the *rebuke*, and such too is the appeal, which now spreads throughout the land, in the sepulchral tones which come up from Lovejoy's grave.

The right of free discussion is dearer and nobler than the right of property, or even that of life itself. Ignorance and bondage rob life of its value. Free discussion denied, the mind is chained, and liberty expires. "To sustain the freedom of the press, no perseverance can be obstinate—no daring rash." To this Nation, as to no other, has God committed, for safe keeping, and a judicious nurture, the cause of human freedom. Ours then is the responsibility of showing to the world, the power of *free institutions* to bless a people. To betray this high trust, is to destroy our own happiness, and to practise treason upon the welfare of the human race; and upon us, would be justly accumulated the execrations of succeeding generations.

The "dark spirit of slavery" has played a deep game, in all this revolting outrage upon personal rights and public law. It has demanded of the free States to gag the press, on this "deli-

cate subject," and to bind the tongue of the lecturer—extinguish the light.

NEVER. A portion of our citizens have indignantly repelled this call of despotism; and with a quenchless zeal, and accumulating energy, do they espouse the cause of the slave and plead for the oppressed. The elements of the storm, which broke its fury upon the fallen Lovejoy, were gathered from the regions of slavery. He was the slaves' friend; the helper of the speechless; the undaunted advocate of the oppressed.—Therefore they hunted him, as if he were a tiger—they *killed* him. The same retribution is unblushingly threatened, and from high sources, upon the whole class of abolitionists.—Would that, in fact, they were more deserving of this honor, if the Christian advocacy of Christian principles, must in this *Christian* land, be visited by the assassin's steel. Others seem to be near such renown, in all its freshness. Volunteers, to supply the place of Lovejoy as Editor, are prepared. And the conviction is spreading, that it is essential to settle the rights of a free press, in this country, in the same bloody city, where its mangled corse pours its wail upon the astounded ear of this mighty republic.

Many who reprobate the murder at Alton, are careful to announce, that they are not abolitionists. Wise and good men take the same position. They tell us that they are the friends of liberty,—of a free press,—of free discussion, and haters of slavery. But they cannot join the abolitionists.

Yes, in every age, wise & good men have come tardily along, in the distant wake of the noblest enterprises of reform. They hung upon the skirts of Luther, and if *their* counsels could have prevailed, they would have sunk him, and the enterprise, and themselves alike, in the unbroken shades of oblivion. They hung upon the skirts of the American Revolution, and had *their* counsels prevailed, they too would have shared the honor of a tory's halter. They have hung upon the skirts of the Temperance Reformation, till its majestic course has shaken them off, or converted them. And they stand in the rear of the abolition enterprise, and gravely assume the attitude of Conservatives, as if it were rash to *purpose* to do what God commands—and a wild fanaticism to insist upon an *immediate repentance*, in those who rob a brother of his wages, and buy

and sell him as a brute,—a thing,—and wring from his muscles, by the torture of the lash, the utmost amount of unrequited labor. Though I question entirely the correctness of their position, this is not the time nor the place for me to controvert it, or to distrust their sincerity. But I ask, on this occasion, what is abolitionism? Over Lovejoy's grave, and with the *Free Press of the United States* in broken fragments at my feet, I implore of these wise and good men, and of this assembly, fully to ascertain the true and correct character of abolitionism. What is the absorbing object, the paramount aim, the one supreme, glorious point, sought by the abolitionists? and for the attainment of which, their swelling ranks are pledged to pour out their treasures and their life!

Abolitionism?—It is the deliverance of MIND from every influence but that of TRUTH—the truth of God who made the mind. It is to tear away from the human intellect, which is the image of God, every bond that malice and the folly of men have entwined around it. It is to allow this mind the same freedom the mind of God has; the entire liberty to embrace the truth, to follow the truth, to rise with it, as its beauties and energies are developed, and to be borne on its wing, from glory to glory, with a tireless gaze upon the perfections and the works of God, in which truth finds its ineffably splendid and eternal developments. Is *this* the abolitionism you oppose?

What are the *measures* of the abolitionists? They consist in the exhibitions of truth. And are these the *measures* you hate?

I design no evasion by this elementary definition. Abolitionism! Look yonder—on that stand is a MAN—a fellow citizen—and sometimes a fellow Christian—rational and immortal like yourself—wearing the skin which God gave him,—announced as PROPERTY,—as such sold for a price—bound, led or driven away like the ox,—compelled to heavy protracted toil without wages,—under the entire control of a master who is responsible to no earthly tribunal for the treatment he gives,—removed from the protection of law, and robbed of every personal right. Now, abolitionism demands that all this robbery and oppression *cease*; that this enslaved man be immediately restored to his personal rights; be allowed

the ownership of himself, as a fellow citizen, amenable to law. And is this the abolitionism you abjure ?

The measures of abolitionists consist in just and lawful efforts only, to bring before the public mind the real character of slavery in this country, the inalienable rights of the slave, and at the same time to *induce the Master* to cease from the wrong he commits, in treating a fellow man as property. The whole effort is that of persuasion ; the only power they would use, in the struggle, is a pure and righteous moral influence. And are these the *measures* you abjure ?

Let the Master restore to the slave his *personal rights*, and the great object, in the present abolition enterprise, is attained ; its triumph is achieved. Now is there anything in this, which your judgement condemns, and at which your soul shudders ? Heed not the slanders which are lavished upon our cause, and our measures. Our principles are all contained in the bill of rights appended to the Constitution of our Country. Our sentiments, in part, are expressed by Senator Calhoun, himself a slave master, in South Carolina. " He who earns the money, digs it out of the earth with the sweat of his brow, has a just title to it against the universe. No one has a right to touch it without his consent, except his government, and it only to the extent of its legitimate wants : to take more is robbery."

It is, in my judgement, unavoidable, that the cause of freedom, shares the same fate precisely, with abolition principles. It is the felicity of abolitionists, that they have taken their stand upon the broad basis of human rights, universally allowed by all, except tyrants, to be just, and essentially fundamental.—Not invented by abolitionists, nor theirs exclusively ; but theirs by *adoption*, and the same grace is permitted to all, and theirs to be sustained at every hazard ; and they hold out the affectionate, respectful, and earnest call that others, and still others, and others still, till the blessed Leaven shall have leavened the whole lump, would plant themselves upon the same principles, and as honestly, and with better skill and talents defend them.

I deem it unquestionable, that you cannot control this reckless spirit of misrule, and put down mobs, nor even arrest this progress of a lawhating violence, so long as you oppose abolitionism, and point to the abolitionists, as a class, as objects of popular disgust, and merited rebuke. For a season, we may

furnish a sweet repast for their revenge. But when their violence has triumphed over us, this same mobocracy will turn upon others ; and if you do not succumb, they will as readily, and as remorselessly grind you to powder, and glut their hellish revenge upon your personal rights and possessions, as upon ours.

It is said that "abolitionists have made the mobs." Were this the fact, it would be, though not so intended in the charge, our highest encomium. For it is the uniform feature, in the mobocracy, that it arrays itself against *order*, intelligence and virtue. A Boston Clergyman, the newspaper reports, in a recent sermon much applauded, gravely says : "If you sustain sentiments, so much in advance of the opinions of the people, as to excite their disgust and indignation, you must expect a mob of course, and *you* are chargeable with the consequences." We are gratified that he should deem us in *advance* on the subject of civil and religious freedom, though we blush that a Christian brother should impute this to us as a fault, and publish it as an apology for the mob. The sentiment, whether advanced by a Boston Clergyman or not, is worthy *only* of the dark ages—and to see it endorsed in the nineteenth century, and under the sanction of the Pulpit, may awaken a smile upon the lip of the slave-master, and of tyrants ; but it must fill with deep regret, the heart of benevolence and republicanism ; and it would seem, could never find a lodgement in a Christian's bosom. Adopt this sentiment, and you of necessity stop the progress of improvement ; or make it, at the best, but the mere progress of the snail.

Point to a single principle in our creed which is wrong, and we will relinquish it. Lay your finger upon a single *measure*, in the support of our principles which, as a class, we approve, and which is not in full accordance with our principles, and we will abandon it. It is the holy cause of Freedom which we have espoused. In this matter, as abolitionists, we have arrayed ourselves with the attributes of God, on the side of the oppressed, *against* the oppressor. We aim to give efficiency to our measures, only by a course which God may approve. Our hearts are enlisted. We wish indeed they were more pure. We know our principles and sentiments, *as abolitionists*, are correct and good, because we have taken them from the

Bible—and because they palpably accord with every attribute of Jehovah, and are the sweetest solace of the pious soul. We bear no ill will to the slave-holder. It is essentially for his *temporal* interest, to cease from his robbery in this matter. And till he cease from this GREAT SIN, guilt increases; nor can we deem *ourselves guiltless in this matter*, unless we speak in the admonition of love, and write and publish our unbending PROTEST against the whole system of American Slavery. Our souls are burdened with the wrong. We cannot be silent, nor suffer ourselves to be diverted from the reform we have commenced. The net profits of the internal slave trade, and the utter misapprehension of our designs, on the part of the great mass of slave-holders, render them obstinate in their course, irritable as light increases, and infatuated in their demands. While we possess our souls in patience, and judiciously avoid the railing retort, we dare not let go our principles, nor abate our zeal, or relax our energies. God admonishes;—humanity weeps;—enslaved millions raise their imploring cry;—prostrate rights bleed at every pore; threatenings multiply;—the fearful interests involved rapidly accumulate;—the crisis crowds upon us:—and Freedom calls, hasten! hasten to the rescue;—from a martyred Brother's grave comes up the melancholly and cheering echo, to the rescue—to the rescue.

Were there, in reference to this momentous concern, another set of principles, just, broad, and eternal, like our own, upon which those who refuse to act with us, could raise their standard and BIND THE MONSTER, I have no doubt, every genuine abolitionist would go over to them, and with a glad heart, affectionately co-operate. But there are no such principles. And free institutions fail to bless the people, despotism reigns, and the population of the Globe groans under the bondage of iron, unless the *principles* of abolitionists are sustained and carried to a triumph. We cannot do this by carnal weapons. No such expectation is indulged. But, God approving, the triumph can be secured by a free press, and free discussion.

Therefore, fellow citizens, the present crisis is not the time "to dwell on the imprudence of abolitionists," or to withhold from their *principles* your approval and sustaining influence. That we say and do things in the best manner, no one pretends.

But that the object we aim at must be obtained, is certain, unless you blight the hope of human rights every where, and abandon, forever, the thought, that the promise of God can be fulfilled.

We act, in this enterprise, for our country, for the enslaved of every color, for ourselves, for the world—personal rights inalienable, one and the same forever, rights sacrificed, wrongs unredressed. In view of the high trusts which God has committed to this Nation, touching the subject of civil and religious freedom, and the rights of conscience, and the apathy of so great a portion of our citizens, at the dastardly claims of "the dark spirit of slavery," I cannot but look upon the abolition enterprise, marked with faults though it be, as a redeeming moral power, thrown into "the Thermopylæ" between Liberty and Despotism, where the great question is to be settled, which shall give the entire future character of this nation, and which shall most essentially roll back, or hasten on this world's subjugation to Christ. And I must act with them. I dare not oppose them. I could not look up to Heaven without blushing, if, in such circumstances, I were not an abolitionist.

I most sacredly believe, that the solemn exigences of the case demand, of those who are disgusted or grieved at the mistakes of abolitionists, the immediate sacrifice, call it noble and magnanimous if you will, of their prejudices, so far at least, as to act in harmony with us, against the common foe. Many have done this, already, since the Alton murder. I see not but others must do the same, or abandon the principles in our bill of rights, and the abandonment of these is a sure sacrifice of our Republic. Was the case ever known, that wise and good men opposed a good and righteous cause, or stood aloof from it, because mistakes marked some of the measures to sustain it, or here and there, a warm-hearted friend, allowed his zeal to get above his discretion?

I deem the present crisis too eventful to admit of trifling, or even of indifference. This is not the time for "cold cavilling about minute questions." Every man who feels that "he has a home, a country, & a God, should now rally around the rights of his fellow men, and the principles of eternal truth." *In such a crisis, the Christian takes the right stand, or he is*

recreant to his religious vows. It is always safe to do right. That measure cannot be inexpedient, which accords with the principles of justice. That enterprise cannot be a rash one, which sustains the rights of the oppressed, and enlists the sympathies of Heaven.

Our reliance must be upon God. We fasten our cause to his throne. We identify its success with the principles which make God holy and Heaven glorious. We feel prepared to suffer in the conflict; and by Divine aid, to attempt all the cause claims of us. We consecrate it in our prayers; and much prayer is needed, where the sacrifice may be life, and where none but God can give the victory.

We are grieved that so many withhold their co-operation. Of some of them, we did expect better things. God is their judge, and not ourselves. When the death knell of oppression shall toll, amidst the universal rejoicings of a free people, we will not frown, if, even then, *their* rejoicings are mingled in the jubilee, although, when the cause fearfully trembled in suspense, they, as wise conservatives, came not to its aid: and should not a righteous God, at the last, let fall upon them his frown, in the curse of Meroz, we will not upbraid them, though not a single slave shall call them his deliverer from bondage, nor a single angel greet them as the undaunted advocates of freedom, or as heroes or martyrs in the defence of human rights.



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